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Way to Cook Fish





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THE WAY TO COOK FISH

Fish is good to eat and good for us. Fish is a good protein food as shown in Canada's Food Rules, our guide to meal planning. As well as protein, fish supplies some fat, minerals and vitamins. Fish adds variety to our everyday meals. We can vary our menus by cooking fish in different ways.

SELECTION OF FRESH FISH

When choosing fresh fish here are some points to check:

1. Fresh fish has a fresh, pleasant odour or no odour at all. There should be no strong odour.
2. In a whole fish the flesh should be firm and elastic. Impressions made by the fingers should disappear quickly. The flesh should not show signs of separation from the bone.
3. The eyes should be clear and bright and the gills red and free from slime.
4. As a general guide on quantity of fish to purchase, one pound of fillets will give three servings, one pound of steaks will give two or three servings, one pound of dressed fish will give two servings.

STORAGE OF FISH

Fish is a perishable food and proper storage of fresh and frozen fish in the home is as important as careful selection at the market. From the time it is delivered until it is used, fresh fish should be kept on ice or in a very cold place. It is good practice to wipe it with a clean damp cloth when received and then wrap it in waxed paper. Frozen fish should be kept solidly frozen until ready for use. For some cooking procedures such as frying and stuffing, it will be necessary to thaw the fish, in which case thawing is best done at refrigerator temperature. Once the fish has thawed it should be cooked immediately. Never try to refreeze fish which has been thawed.

COOKERY OF FISH

The flesh of fish is of a tender nature and does not require a long cooking period. Do not thaw fish before cooking except when necessary for ease in handling.

You will know your fish is cooked when:

1. The flesh loses its translucent appearance and becomes opaque.
2. The flesh flakes readily.
3. The flesh is easily pierced with a fork.

Fish may be cooked	in the Oven
	in the Frying Pan
	in Deep Fat
	in Water or Milk

Fish should be served immediately, while it is still piping hot, tender and juicy. Do not overcook. Overcooking dries and toughens fish.

IN THE OVEN

Baking is a suitable method for whole fish, steaks and fillets, both fresh and frozen.

1. Measure the thickness of the fish or pieces of fish at its thickest part.
2. Season fish, place in a greased baking pan and then brush with melted fat or add a topping or a sauce.
3. Bake in a very hot oven (450°F. to 500°F.). Allow 10 minutes cooking time for each inch thickness. If fish is frozen, double the cooking time.

Spencer Method For Fish Fillets

2 pounds fish fillets
1/2 cup milk

1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup fine dry bread crumbs

Cut fillets into individual portions and soak 3 minutes in milk to which the salt has been added. Drain and roll in dry bread crumbs. Place fish on a greased baking dish and dot with butter. Bake in a very hot oven (450°F. to 500°F.). Allow 10 minutes per inch thickness for fresh fish or 20 minutes per inch thickness for frozen fish.
Makes 6 servings.

In Aluminum Foil In The Oven

The aluminum foil seals in the flavour and juices and the fish steams in its own liquid.

1. Measure thickness of fish or piece of fish and season. If a glazed frozen fish is to be cooked, chip off as much of ice glaze as possible.
2. Wrap fish in an envelope of greased aluminum foil. Make double folds in the foil and pinch folds to make steam tight.
3. Place package on a baking sheet or in a shallow pan and bake in a very hot oven (450°F. to 500°F.). Allow 10 minutes cooking time per inch thickness for fresh fish and 20 minutes cooking time per inch thickness for frozen fish, plus additional cooking time for heat to penetrate foil and fish. An extra 5 minutes for fresh fish and 10 minutes for frozen fish is recommended.

E-Z Hollandaise Sauce For Fish

3 egg yolks
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons lemon juice
OR vinegar

1/3 cup butter, melted
1/4 cup boiling water

Beat egg yolks lightly; add salt and lemon juice or vinegar. Stir in melted butter and then add boiling water. Place over hot but not boiling water. Stir and cook until thickened (about 5 minutes). Serve immediately or set aside and re-heat when needed.

Makes 3/4 cup.

Baked Stuffed Fish

1. Clean the fish by removing entrails, scales and fins. The head and tail may be left on if desired. Wash and dry the fish.
2. Sprinkle it on the inside with salt. Stuff it loosely with the stuffing of your choice, allowing about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup for each pound of dressed fish (if the backbone is removed, allow about 1 cup for each pound of dressed fish).
3. Fasten the opening with small skewers or tooth-picks and loop string about them as you would lace shoes. Place the stuffed fish on a greased baking pan and brush with melted fat or oil.
4. Measure the stuffed fish at the thickest part. Bake in a hot oven (450°F.) allowing 10 minutes cooking time for each inch of stuffed thickness.

Tarragon Bread Stuffing

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped onion	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon tarragon
$\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped celery	3 cups soft bread crumbs
3 tablespoons butter	
1 teaspoon salt	

Cook the onion and celery in butter until tender (about 5 minutes). Add salt and seasoning. Toss lightly with bread crumbs.

Use to stuff a 3-4 pound dressed fish.

UNDER THE BROILER

Broiling is one of the best and easiest methods of cooking fresh or frozen steaks, fillets or small whole fish.

1. Measure the thickness of the fish or pieces of fish and place on a greased broiler pan.
2. Baste with melted fat or a basting sauce.
3. Place broiler pan in a preheated oven so that the fish is 2 to 4 inches from heating unit. If fish is frozen, distance from heat should be increased to 6 or 8 inches to prevent overcooking surface before interior is cooked.

4. Broil fish allowing about 10 minutes broiling time per inch of thickness. If the fish is frozen allow 20 minutes per inch thickness. Turn fish at about half time, season and baste with melted fat or sauce. Broil until cooked. Season.

Broiled Salmon Steaks

6 salmon steaks	1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup fat, melted	1/8 teaspoon pepper

Place fish on a greased broiler pan and brush with fat. Place broiler pan 2 to 4 inches from heating unit. If fish is frozen place pan 6 to 8 inches from heating unit. Allow 10 minutes broiling time per inch thickness for fresh fish and about 20 minutes per inch thickness for frozen fish. At half time, season and turn fish. Brush with fat and complete cooking. Season.
Makes 6 servings.

For variety: to fat, salt and pepper

add	1/4 teaspoon dried marjoram
	1 tablespoon finely chopped onion
	1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
	3 tablespoons lemon juice

Marinate steaks in this sauce, 15 to 20 minutes, turning once. Then broil as above.

IN THE FRYING PAN

This is a popular method for cooking steaks, fillets and small whole fish.

1. If necessary, cut into serving-size pieces. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Dip fish in liquid (milk or egg) and then in flour or other breading mixture.
3. Heat 1/4 inch of fat in a frying pan and have it hot, but not smoking.
4. Fry fish until golden brown on one side, turn and brown the other side. The complete cooking time will be approximately 10 minutes per inch thickness of fresh fish or 20 minutes per inch thickness of frozen fish.
5. Drain, and serve piping hot.

Pan Fried Fish

2 pounds fillets	1/2 cup flour
1 teaspoon salt	3/4 cup fine dry bread crumbs
1/2 cup milk	

Cut fillets into serving-size pieces. Dip in salted milk and then in flour. For a crisp coating, dip in milk again and then in fine dry bread crumbs. (A few drops of Worcestershire sauce may be added to the milk for extra flavour). Fry in hot fat until golden brown on each side, drain and serve immediately.

Makes 6 servings.

IN DEEP FAT

Fillets, smelts, fish cakes and shellfish are good when fried in deep hot fat. If frozen fish is used, it is better to thaw it first.

1. Use fish fillets not more than 1/2 inch thick and cut in uniform serving-size pieces.
2. If the pieces of fish are thick, but not thick enough to slice conveniently, make three or four slits in the side. This helps the fish to cook more evenly and quickly.
3. Dip pieces of fish in batter and fry in deep fat at 375°F. until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Drain.

Batter

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
1 cup milk

Mix and sift dry ingredients. Beat eggs and add milk. Add liquid to dry ingredients, and stir until smooth. Makes enough for 2 pounds fish.

Fish may also be breaded as in Pan Fried Fish and then fried in deep fat.

IN BOILING WATER

(In parchment paper or aluminum foil)

Portions of whole fish or fillets which are to be used for salads, casseroles, fish cakes or for creamed fish dishes may be cooked in water.

1. Measure thickness of piece of fish and place on a sheet of dampened parchment paper or a piece of greased aluminum foil.
2. Season with salt and pepper. If desired, 1 table-spoon each of chopped celery and onion may be added.
3. Draw up corners of parchment paper, pouch fashion, and tie with a string. If using aluminum foil, fold foil over fish securing open edges with double folds to make package water tight.
4. Plunge packaged fish into rapidly boiling water. Cover container and when water returns to boiling point, time the cooking period. Allow 10 minutes cooking time per inch of thickness if fish is fresh and 20 minutes per inch of thickness if it is frozen.
5. When removing fish from paper, save juices to use in a fish sauce.

Fish Sauce

2 tablespoons butter	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons flour	Few grains pepper
1 cup fish stock (fish juices plus milk to make volume)	

Melt butter over low heat or in top of double boiler. Mix in flour and cook stirring until mixture is bubbly. Add fish stock gradually. Cook and stir until thickened. Add seasonings. Cook a few minutes longer for best flavour. Makes 1 cup.

Egg Sauce: Add 1 or 2 chopped hard-cooked eggs.
If desired, 2 tablespoons chopped parsley may be added.

Cheese Sauce:
Add 1/2 cup grated Cheddar cheese.

Tomato Sauce

2 tablespoons chopped onion	1 teaspoon sugar
2 tablespoons butter	1/8 teaspoon pepper
2 tablespoons flour	6 peppercorns
1 teaspoon salt	1 bay leaf
	1 can (20 ounces) tomatoes

Cook onion in butter until tender. Stir in flour and cook until bubbly. Add seasonings. Slowly add tomatoes. Cook and stir until thickened. Cook over low heat for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Before serving, remove peppercorns and bay leaf.
Makes 2 cups.

SMOKED FILLETS IN MILK

2 pounds smoked fillets	1 tablespoon butter
1 to 2 cups milk	1/8 teaspoon pepper

Cut fillets into serving-size pieces. Simmer in milk until fish flakes easily with a fork. Fish may be cooked covered or uncovered on top of stove or in a hot oven (450°F.). Allow 10 minutes cooking time per inch thickness for fresh fish and about 20 minutes cooking time per inch thickness for frozen fish.

Season with pepper, dot with butter and serve immediately. If desired, milk may be thickened and served as a cream sauce.
Makes 6 servings.

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